

## **Erie County Executive Energy Achievement Award**

**Name of Project:** Town of Tonawanda Energy \$mart Holiday Decorating Contest

**Name of Organization:** Town of Tonawanda Commission for Conservation of the Environment

**Address:** 2919 Delaware Avenue  
Kenmore, NY 14217

**Name of the contact:** Peter C. Rizzo

**Phone number of contact:** (716) 877-8804

**Dates of project conception and completion:** From September '05 to December '05

### **Describe the condition that first caused the project to be considered:**

The Town of Tonawanda Energy \$mart Holiday Decorating Contest was an initiative of the Town of Tonawanda for Conservation of the Environment. Each year the Commission holds a holiday decorating contest for residents of the Village of Kenmore and the Town of Tonawanda, highlighting homes that demonstrate significant holiday spirit. In September of 2005, the Commission elected to alter the program to solely promote energy efficiency in holiday decorating.

### **Give a one to two paragraph narrative description of the overall project:**

The Commission partnered with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and LED technology companies that specialize in light emitting diode technology. Throughout the Fall and early Winter months the groundwork was laid to promote the Energy \$mart Holiday Decorating Contest among area public and private elementary and middle schools to educate students on the importance of energy conservation and efficiency, encouraging them to decorate their own homes with these principals in mind. Schools were also provided with LED light strands to decorate for the holiday season.

The Commission encouraged homeowners to enter their energy efficient holiday display into the contest. Each home was judged on a number of environmental factors, including the amount of electricity used, energy saving devices, use of LED lighting, and overall aesthetics. On December 19, 2005, winners were honored at the Town of Tonawanda Board meeting and awarded cash prizes provided by area businesses, along with energy saving compact florescent lights donated by NYSERDA.

### **What was the initial goal of the project?**

To promote energy efficient holiday decorating throughout the Town of Tonawanda and the Village of Kenmore.

### **Was renewable energy technology considered for the project and how?**

No.

**What steps were taken to achieve the goal?**

1. Idea was conceived
2. NYSERDA and business partners contacted
3. Schools contacted
4. Creation and dissemination of school information packets/press releases
5. Homes judged
6. Awards ceremony

**What obstacles were overcome to complete this project?**

Coordination of efforts on behalf of the schools and NYSERDA were the largest obstacles.

**What support did the project receive?**

The project received support from the Town of Tonawanda municipal government, NYSERDA, LED companies, local schools, area businesses, and residents.

**What was the projected pay-back period for the project?**

N/A

**Is the pay-back on target?**

N/A

**What are the results of the project?**

The project resulted in educating students and residents on the importance of energy conservation, and encouraged homeowners to use energy efficient tactics to decorate their homes, from timers, to LED light displays, to using no electricity at all.

**What would you do differently on the next energy project?**

Provide more resources for residents to obtain/purchases LED lights.

**What do you or your organization consider the most positive secondary outcome from the project?**

NYSERDA's involvement will help spread the word to municipalities across New York State that they too can create an Energy Smart Holiday Decorating Contest to encourage energy efficiency during the holiday season. We know that other communities are currently interested in taking on a similar project.

**Are you currently purchasing any "green" energy?**

N/A

**How will you or your organization be willing to mentor others in starting an energy conservation project?**

The Commission members involved in the project would be very excited to help other communities take on the same or similar projects, provide advisement, and resources to ensure a successful program.

**May we post/publish your project on our website?**

Yes.